2016 Census: Population and Dwelling Counts

BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Stats

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- BC adds nearly 250,000 (+5.6%) people between 2011 and 2016
- Mainland/Southwest drives BC growth with an increase of 174,000 (+6.6%)
- Nationally, the population grew by 1.7 million (+5.0%)

2016 Census: Highlights from the Population and Dwelling Release

Statistics Canada has released the population and dwelling counts from the 2016 Census today. This release spans a wide range of geographies, from Canada, provinces and territories to regional districts and municipalities. Information is also available for land area, population density, population rank and population percentage change from 2011.

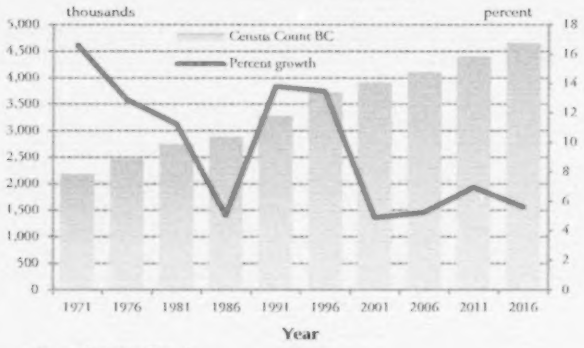
The next release is May 3rd, 2017 and will profile census population counts by age and sex.

Population in B.C.

On Census day, May 10th 2016, there were 4,648,055 persons living in B.C. This is a population increase of 5.6% when compared to the 2011 Census (4,400,057 persons). This rate of growth is lower than the 7.0% population growth between the 2006 and 2011 Censuses.

The 2016 Census figures also show that the B.C. population lived in 2,063,417 private dwellings, and that 1,881,969 of these were occupied by their usual residents. This represents an average of 2.25 persons per private dwelling, a figure that has held relatively steady over the past decade.

BC Population and Percent Growth (1971 to 2016 Census Counts)

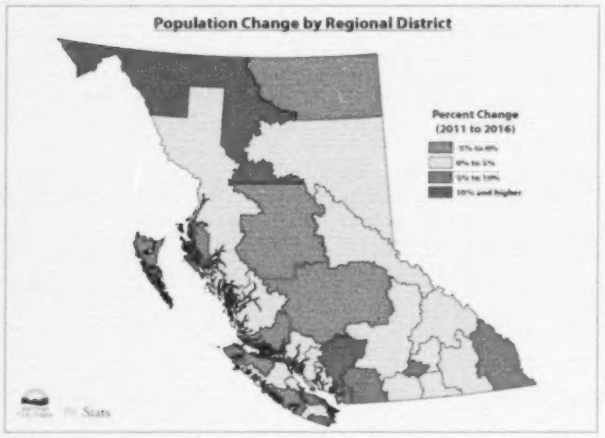


Source: Statistics Canada

Population in BC Regional Districts

At the B.C. regional district (RD) level, eight out of the 29 regional districts show population growth higher than the overall provincial growth. Stikine Region and Squamish-Lillooet RD were in the lead with double digit population increases (+17.6% and +11.8% respectively) followed by the regional districts of Central Okanagan (+8.4%), Fraser Valley (+6.6%), East Kootenay (+6.6%), Capital (+6.5%), Greater Vancouver (+6.5%) and Nanaimo (+6.2%).

Six regional districts reported a population decline between the 2011 and 2016. These include the regional districts of Alberni-Clayoquot (-0.3%), Cariboo (-0.6%), Northern Rockies (-3.3%), Bulkley-Nechako (-3.3%), Skeena-Queen Charlotte (-3.5%) and Mount Waddington (-4.1%).



Population in Development Regions

At the B.C. development region level (aggregations of the regional districts), the development region of Mainland/Southwest shows the highest population growth at 6.6%. Following Mainland/Southwest were Vancouver Island/Coast (+5.3%), Thompson Okanagan (+4.9%), Northeast (+4.1%), Kootenay (+3.5%), Cariboo (+1.4%), North Coast –1.1%, and Nechako –3.0%.

Population in B.C. Municipalities

At the municipal level, the changes in population between 2011 and 2016 varies widely, ranging from an increase of 66.0% in the Municipality of Sun Peak Mountain to a decline of 26.7% in Tumbler Ridge. However, both of these municipalities are small, with total populations in 2016 of 616 and 1,987 persons, respectively.

The larger municipalities (10,000 or more residents in 2016) show a different picture. The City of Langford leads with a 20.9% growth rate, followed closely by Whistler (+20.7%), and then Squamish (+13.7%), Sooke (+13.7%) and Langley District Municipality (+12.6%).

Prince Rupert, Williams Lake, West Vancouver, Port Alberni and Powell River are the only municipalities (greater than 10,000) that have declined in population since the previous census.

Top 10 and Bottom 10 Municipalities* by Population Change

	2016 Population	2011 Population	Per Cent Growth
Langford	35,342	29,228	20.9%
Whistler	11,854	9,824	20.7%
Squamish	19,512	17,158	13.7%
Sooke	13,001	11,435	13.7%
Langley, District Municipality	117,285	104,177	12.6%
View Royal	10,408	9,381	10.9%
Surrey	517,887	468,251	10.6%
Lake Country	12,922	11,708	10.4%
Sechelt District Municipality	10,216	9,291	10.0%
Coquitlam	139,284	126,804	9.8%
Port Moody	33,551	33,011	1.6%
North Saanich	11,249	11,089	1.4%
Salmon Arm	17,706	17,464	1.4%
Terrace	11,643	11,486	1.4%
Oak Bay	18,094	18,015	0.4%
Powell River	13,157	13,165	-0.1%
Port Alberni	17,678	17,743	-0.4%
West Vancouver	42,473	42,694	-0.5%
Williams Lake	10,753	10,832	-0.7%
Prince Rupert	12,220	12,508	-2.3%

* population greater than 10,000

The strong population growth in Langford, Sooke and View Royal contributed to the total population increase in the Capital Regional District (CRD).

The cities of Surrey, Coquitlam, and North Vancouver as well as the District Municipality of Langley gave momentum to the population growth in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD).

At the same time, all four municipalities within the Central Okanagan (Kelowna, West Kelowna, Lake Country and Peachland) show a positive population growth which put the Central Okanagan third on the population growth list.

Population Density in B.C

Population density, a measure of concentration of population within a given geographic area (defined as the number of person per square kilometre) is also presented in this census release. The overall population density in B.C. was approximately 5 persons per square kilometre in 2016.

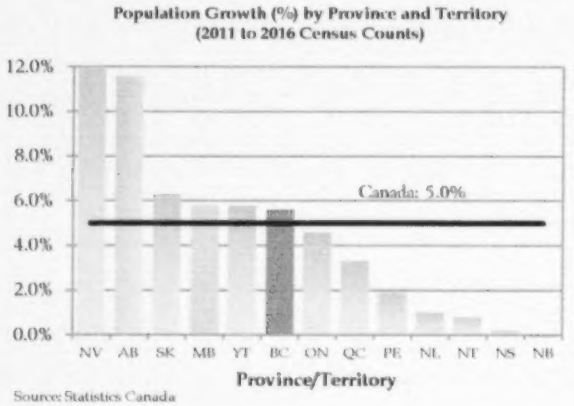
Municipal population densities in the province range widely from 5,492 persons per square kilometre in the City of Vancouver to 20 persons in Spallumcheen. Given that the geographic boundaries of most municipalities change very little over time, growth in a municipality's population usually leads to a higher population density.

National Highlights

According to the newly released 2016 Census counts, Canada had a population of 35,151,728 persons, an increase of 1,675,040 persons (or 5.0%) from the 2011 Census. The Canadian population growth has slowed slightly from the 5.9% recorded in the previous census. It was also reported that approximately 14.1 million private dwellings in Canada were occupied by their usual residents in 2016, an increase of 5.6% from 2011.

B.C.'s population growth of 5.6% between 2011 and 2016 was above the national increase of 5.0% but considerably lower than Alberta's growth of 11.6%.

Our share of the total Canadian population remained about the same at 13.2%.



Source: Statistics Canada

Is Everyone Counted in the Census?

Not everyone is counted in the census and some people are counted more than once. Statistics Canada undertakes a series of 'coverage studies' to assess the net impact of missing or over-counted people and households. The difference between the number of people missed and those counted more than once is commonly referred to as the 'net census undercount'. In 2011 the estimated net census undercount for BC was 91,280 or 2.0% of the BC population, just below the undercount for 2.2% for Canada. The coverage studies effort is currently under way, and the 2016 Census' net undercount will be released late 2018.

2016 Census Highlights and Future Releases

The Census was conducted on May 10th, 2016.

In 2011, the mandatory long form of the census was replaced with the voluntary National Household Survey (NHS) and sent to one in three households. In 2016, the mandatory long form was reinstated and sent to one in four households. However, the overall response rate for the 2016 long form was nearly 98% much higher than the 68% for the NHS. As a result, the 2016 data is expected to be of better quality, and more comparable to previous censuses.

2016 Census Release Schedule

This is the first of seven census releases in 2017. The information collected in the 2016 Census will be released over the next nine months, according to the following schedule:

February 8, 2017:

- Population and dwellings

May 3, 2017:

- Population by Age and Gender
- Type of Dwelling

May 10, 2017:

- Census of Agriculture

August 2, 2017:

- Families, households and marital status
- Language

September 13, 2017:

- Income

October 25, 2017:

- Immigration and ethnocultural diversity
- Housing
- Aboriginal peoples

November 29, 2017:

- Education
- Labour
- Journey to work
- Language of work
- Mobility and migration

For more information on the 2016 Census please visit the BC Stats website at **Census of Canada** or the Statistics Canada **2016 Census** website.

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